

# HH 1011

## US History since 1865

Instructor: Associate Professor Miles Powell  
Email: miles.powell@ntu.edu.sg  
Office: HSS-05-24  
Office hours: By appointment

Pre-requisites: None  
Academic Units: 3  
Meeting time: Wednesdays, 9:30-12:30 am  
Venue: Lectures: LHS-TR+31

### Course Aims

Aimed at history students but also suitable for anyone with an interest in US history, this elective course will provide you with a general overview of American history from the Reconstruction Era through the War on Terror. This class will also introduce you to some of the key theoretical approaches and debates in the writing of US history. Upon completion of this course, you will have a better understanding of the historical development of America's political, social, cultural, and economic systems. You will additionally be stronger writers and thinkers.

### Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- 1. Investigate and explain** the role of a range of historical processes in the political, cultural, and societal formation of the United States since 1865.
- 2. Compare and contrast** the major historical approaches and theories to US history.
- 3. Analyze and interpret** primary and secondary historical sources relating to US history.
- 4. Formulate** novel historical arguments about US history that effectively deploy primary and secondary source evidence.
- 5. Articulate** compelling, evidence-based, and well-reasoned arguments concerning US history in written and oral form.

### Course Content

This course provides an introduction to modern American history, covering the growth of the nation and its people, government, and economy after the end of the Civil War. It will acquaint students with the major themes in the creation of the modern United

States. These include expansion over the continent, the development of political institutions, immigration, race relations, and the elaboration of powerful and productive industries.

**Required Books:**

This course has no textbook, so students are encouraged to attend all seminars. Assigned readings will be available on the NTULearn course site. To help you follow along, you may wish to consult the following book, copies of which are on reserves at the Library Outpost:

Boyer, Paul S. *American History: A Very Short Introduction* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2012)

**Student Assessment:**

In-Class Participation:	15%
Primary Source Analysis:	20%
Essay Proposal:	10%
Film Analysis:	20%
Research Essay:	35%

**In-Class Participation:**

Students must attend every seminar prepared to discuss that week’s assigned readings. Outstanding participants will demonstrate a thorough and critical understanding of the assigned material by offering perceptive comments and asking informed questions. Disruptive behaviors, such as constant tardiness or non-course-related conversations during lectures, presentations, or class discussion, will adversely affect your participation score.

**Primary Source Analysis:**

Primary source analysis is a key skill that is required for historical research, and this assignment is designed to prepare students for their research essay (see below). You are required to select a primary source (such as a memoir, novel, official report, newspaper report, speech, newsreel, or artwork) that is contemporary with the subject of your major essay. That is, the source should be from the period you address in your essay, and on the topic of your essay. You will then briefly place the primary source in historical context, provide an analysis of the author and audience of the text, and analyze the primary source in light of your essay question. This assignment will be due on Week VI (17 February).

### **Essay Proposal:**

You will submit an outline of your research essay (see essay prompt below), so that I can make sure you are on the right track. This outline must include a thesis statement, a list of sources, and an overview of the essay's structure (see detailed assignment instructions below, following course outline). This assignment will be due on Week IX (17 March).

### **Film Analysis:**

We will watch three films over the course of the semester on themes related to US history since 1865. You will select one of these films and write a short (600-word) analysis of it. This will NOT be a film review, in which you comment on acting, plot, or dialogue. Instead you will need to determine what argument this film is making about America's past, and whether you agree with this argument. You will need to support your contention by drawing on at least six scholarly sources (properly cited with footnotes). Your analysis will be due two weeks after the final screening of your chosen film (they will all be split across two weeks).

### **Research Essay:**

You will choose a historical figure from a provided list and use their life to make an argument about American history since 1865. Your essay must draw on appropriately-cited primary and secondary source research, and must present a clear and forceful thesis. This assignment will be due on Week XIII (14 April).

### **Course Outline and Readings:**

Week I (13/01): Introduction

Readings:

None.

**\*\*\*Writing workshop in seminar\*\*\***

Week II (20/01): Reconstruction to Redemption

Readings:

McClintock, Megan J. "Civil War Pensions and the Reconstruction of Union Families" *The Journal of American History*, 83(2) (Sep., 1996), pp. 456-480.

Foner, Eric. "Reconstruction Revisited" *Reviews in American History*, Vol. 10, No. 4, *The Promise of American History: Progress and Prospects* (Dec., 1982), pp. 82-100.

#### Week III (27/01): The Challenges of the Gilded Age

##### Readings:

McGreevy, John T. "Farmers, Nationalists, and the Origins of California Populism" *Pacific Historical Review* 58(4) (Nov., 1989): 471-495.

Lee, Erika. "The Chinese Exclusion Example: Race, Immigration, and American Gatekeeping, 1882-1924" *Journal of American Ethnic History* 21(3) (Spring, 2002): 36-62.

Film Screening: *Little Big Man* (1990), Part 1

#### Week IV (03/02): The Spanish American War

##### Readings:

"The Spanish-American War" in Jerri Bell, Tracy Crow, eds. *It's My Country Too: Women's Military Stories from the American Revolution to Afghanistan* (University of Nebraska, 2017)

Turpie, David C. "A Voluntary War: The Spanish-American War, White Southern Manhood, and the Struggle to Recruit Volunteers in the South" *The Journal of Southern History* 80(4) (NOVEMBER 2014), pp. 859-892.

Film Screening: *Little Big Man* (1990), Part 2

#### Week V (10/02): Progressivism

##### Readings:

Axel R. Schafer, "W. E. B. Du Bois, German Social Thought, and the Racial Divide in American Progressivism, 1892-1909" *The Journal of American History* 88(3) (Dec., 2001), 925-949.

Jordan, Ben. "'Conservation of Boyhood': Boy Scouting's Modest Manliness and Natural Resource Conservation, 1910-1930" *Environmental History*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (OCTOBER 2010), pp. 612-642.

Week VI (17/02): World War I

**\*\*\*Submit Primary Source Analysis through Turnitin by 9:30 am\*\*\***

Readings:

Barsh, Russel Lawrence. "American Indians in the Great War" *Ethnohistory* 38(3) (Summer, 1991): 276-303.

Capozzola, Christopher "The Only Badge Needed Is Your Patriotic Fervor: Vigilance, Coercion, and the Law in World War I America" *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 88, No. 4 (Mar., 2002), pp. 1354-1382.

Week VII (24/02): From Prosperity to Depression

Readings:

Cohen, Lizabeth. "Encountering Mass Culture at the Grassroots: The Experience of Chicago Workers in the 1920s" *American Quarterly* 41(1) (Mar., 1989): 6-33.

Weisiger, Marsha. "Gendered Injustice: Navajo Livestock Reduction in the New Deal Era" *The Western Historical Quarterly* 38(4) (Winter, 2007): 437-455.

**\*\*\*Recess Week\*\*\***

Week VIII (10/03): World War II

Readings:

Chiang, Connie. "Imprisoned Nature: Toward and Environmental History of the World War II Japanese American Incarceration" *Environmental History* 15(2) (April 2010): 236-67.

Bailey, Beth and David Farber, "The 'Double-V Campaign' in World War II Hawaii: African-Americans, Racial Ideology, and Federal Power" *Journal of Social History* 26(4) (Summer, 1993): 817-843.

Film Screening: *Flags of our Fathers* (2006), Part 1

Week IX (17/03): The Cold War

**\*\*\*Submit Essay Proposal through Turnitin by 9:30 am\*\*\***

Readings:

Andrea Friedman, "The Strange Career of Annie Lee Moss: Rethinking Race, Gender, and McCarthyism" *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 94, No. 2 (Sep., 2007), pp. 445-468

Dudziak, Mary L. "Brown as a Cold War Case" *The Journal of American History* 91(1) (June 2004): 32-42.

Film Screening: *Flags of our Fathers* (2006), Part 2

Week X (24/03): The 1960s, War at Home and Abroad

Tutorial Readings:

PENIEL E. JOSEPH, "The Black Power Movement, Democracy, and America in the King Years" *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 114, No. 4 (OCTOBER 2009), pp. 1001-1016.

Ang Cheng Guan, "The Vietnam War, 1962-64: The Vietnamese Communist Perspective" *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Oct., 2000), pp. 601-618.

Week XI (31/03): Liberalism and Conservative Backlash

Readings:

Dant, Sara. "LBJ, Wilderness, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund" *Environmental History*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (October 2014), pp. 736-743.

Kotlowski, Dean J. "From Backlash to Bingo: Ronald Reagan and Federal Indian Policy" *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 77, No. 4 (November 2008), pp. 617-652.

Film Screening: *Apocalypse Now* (1979), Part 1

Week XII (07/04): Neoliberalism and Globalization

Readings:

Moisés Naím, "Clinton's Foreign Policy: A Victim of Globalization?" *Foreign Policy*, No. 109 (Winter, 1997-1998), pp. 34-45.

Film Screening: *Apocalypse Now* (1979), Part 2

Week XIII (14/04): The War on Terror

Tutorial Readings:

**\*\*\*Submit Research Essay through Turnitin by 9:30 am\*\*\***

Jespersen, T. Christopher .“Analogies at War” Pacific Historical Review 74(3)  
(August 2005): 411-426.

### **Assignment Instructions**

#### **Primary Source Analysis**

In this short (400-500 word) paper, you should:

- a) Briefly place the primary source in historical context. What do we need to know about the political, social and economic context in order to understand this primary source?
- b) Provide an analysis of the author and audience of the text. What social background does the author come from? Who does the text address? What is the primary viewpoint or agenda of the author?
- c) Analyze the primary source in light of your essay question. This should be the greater part of this essay.

I would recommend against significant quotes from the source, as this will not allow you enough space to analyze it (and thus may result in a deduction of marks for a lack of analysis).

#### **Essay Proposal:**

This outline should be no more than 600 words (not including footnote citations, but **including** the annotated bibliography). The outline should introduce your thesis statement, and then lay out the structure of your essay. Your thesis statement should be written in proper academic English. You can plot out the structure of your essay using point form. You should also include an annotated bibliography identifying the sources you will use (at least six) and briefly explaining why you selected them (one or two sentences per source).

#### **Argumentative Essay:**

Choose a figure and a historical theme from the lists below and answer the following question: **What does this figure tell us about the role of this theme in the unfolding of US history?**

Your essay should include a brief overview of the individual's life. However, it should not be a descriptive or narrative account of this person's life. Rather, your essay should be an *analysis* of what their life tells us about the role of your selected theme in American history. Thus, you should examine your figure's life in light of the historical milieu in which they lived. Your essay must also include a central argument – what historians term a “thesis.” You may select a second theme, but if you do so, you must use your chosen figure to consider how these themes intersected in the unfolding of US history, rather than treat each theme separately. You may write on a figure not included on the list, but only with approval from the instructor.

Your essay should analyze *at least* one written primary source and one visual primary source. These primary sources should be examined in the body of the essay. Visual primary sources (such as photographs, paintings, posters and political cartoons) should be used as an example to demonstrate your argument (not merely as an illustration). An excellent essay will analyze in the flow of the essay the historical context in which the primary sources were produced; the authorship of these sources; and their audience.

Your paper should be 1,800-2,000 words, double-spaced, and in 12-point Times New Roman or a similar-sized font. It should cite at least six scholarly sources. No cover page is required. Likewise, no bibliography is necessary, but your paper should use Chicago-style footnote citations.

List of figures:

Elizabeth Cady Stanton  
John Muir  
George Armstrong Custer  
Sitting Bull  
Wovoka  
Robert Smalls  
Edith Wharton  
Andrew Carnegie  
Samuel Gompers  
Booker T. Washington  
W. E. B. Du Bois  
Susan B. Anthony  
Jane Adams  
Eleanor Roosevelt  
Queen Liliuokalani  
Emilio Aguinaldo  
Gifford Pinchot



Hellen Keller  
Margaret Dreier Robins  
John Meynard Keynes  
Huey Long  
Father Charles Coughlin  
A. Philip Randolph  
Ira Hayes  
Julius and Ethel Rosenberg  
Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Stokely Carmichael  
Huey Newton  
Cesar Chavez  
Betty Friedan  
Neil Armstrong  
Muhammad Ali  
Billie Jean King  
Louis Armstrong  
Michael Jackson

List of themes:

Environment  
Science and Technology  
Art  
Diplomacy  
Law  
Economics  
Imperialism  
Religion  
Race  
Gender  
Class  
Sexuality  
Disability

### **Course Policies and Student Responsibilities**

Your Responsibilities: You are responsible for making yourself aware of all the information in this document. Familiarize yourself with due dates, times, and so on. It is also your responsibility to come to class prepared to participate. This means having completed the reading assignments, and having something to take notes with (either pen and paper or a laptop computer or tablet).

Medical Certificates: Medical Certificates (MCs) are not “get out of jail free” cards. The presentation of a medical certificate does not automatically excuse an absence or late work. Depending on the circumstances, I will usually ask for you to complete additional work in order to “make up” for missed classes.

Late Policy: I will penalize late work at the rate of 10% of the maximum grade per 24-hour period overdue. For example, work that is 2 hours late will receive a 10% penalty, work that is 26 hours late a 20% penalty, work that is 55 hours late a 30% penalty, and so on. I may grant extensions in some special cases. However, I will not grant extensions within one week of the deadline (in other words, if you think you need an extension, ask early).

Plagiarism and Cheating: Universities consider using the works of others without properly acknowledging that use (that is, copying) to be “cheating.” In this course, such behavior will result in a score of zero on the assignment in question. In accordance with school policy, I will also report especially egregious cases to the university to be placed on record in your academic file. Learn how to cite the work of others properly. Do not ever copy. If in doubt, ask.

### **Academic Integrity**

Good academic work depends on honesty and ethical behaviour. The quality of your work as a student relies on adhering to the principles of academic integrity and to the NTU Honour Code, a set of values shared by the whole university community. Truth, Trust and Justice are at the core of NTU’s shared values.

As a student, it is important that you recognize your responsibilities in understanding and applying the principles of academic integrity in all the work you do at NTU. Not knowing what is involved in maintaining academic integrity does not excuse academic dishonesty. You need to actively equip yourself with strategies to avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, academic fraud, collusion and cheating. If you are uncertain of the definitions of any of these terms, you should go to the academic integrity website for more information. Consult your instructor(s) if you need any clarification about the requirements of academic integrity in the course.